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The German Alpine Route

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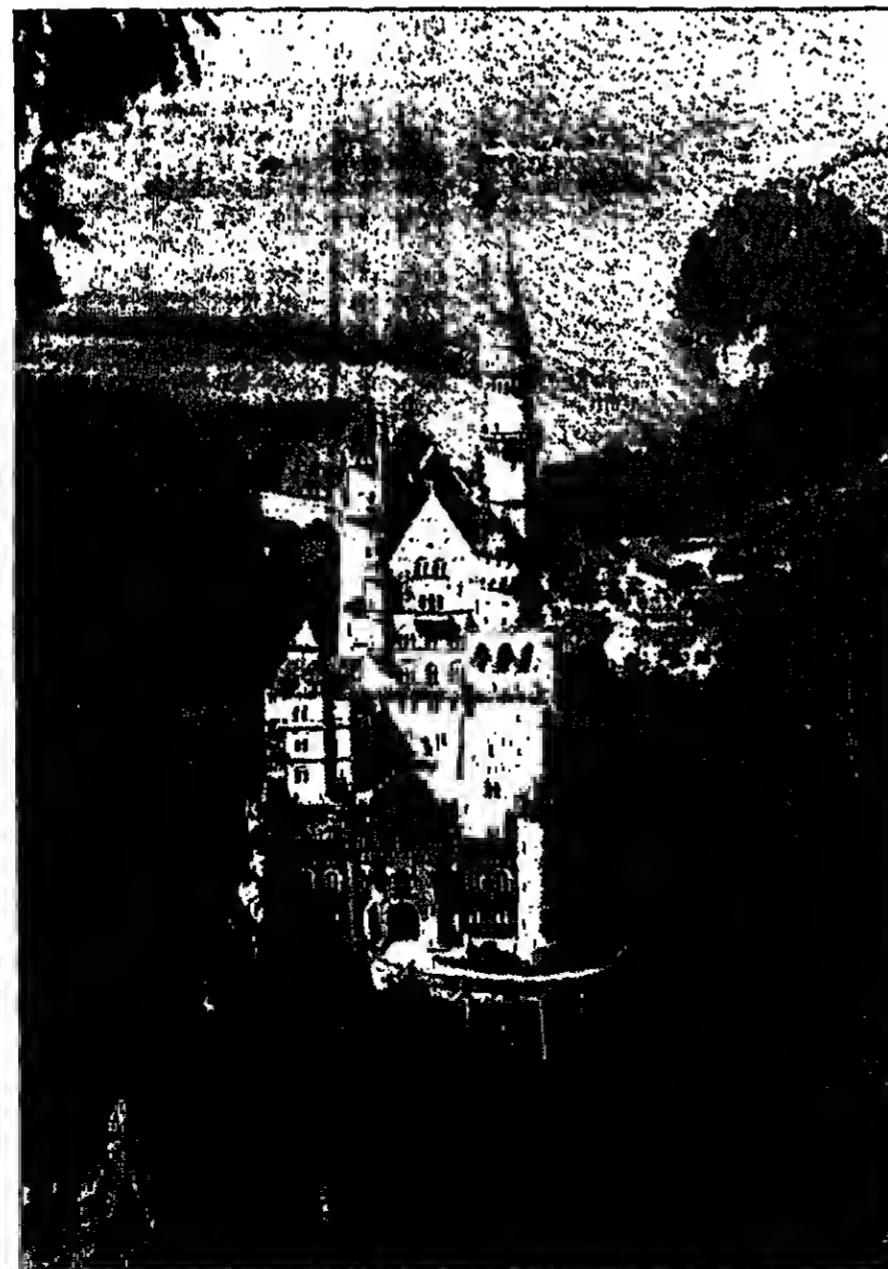
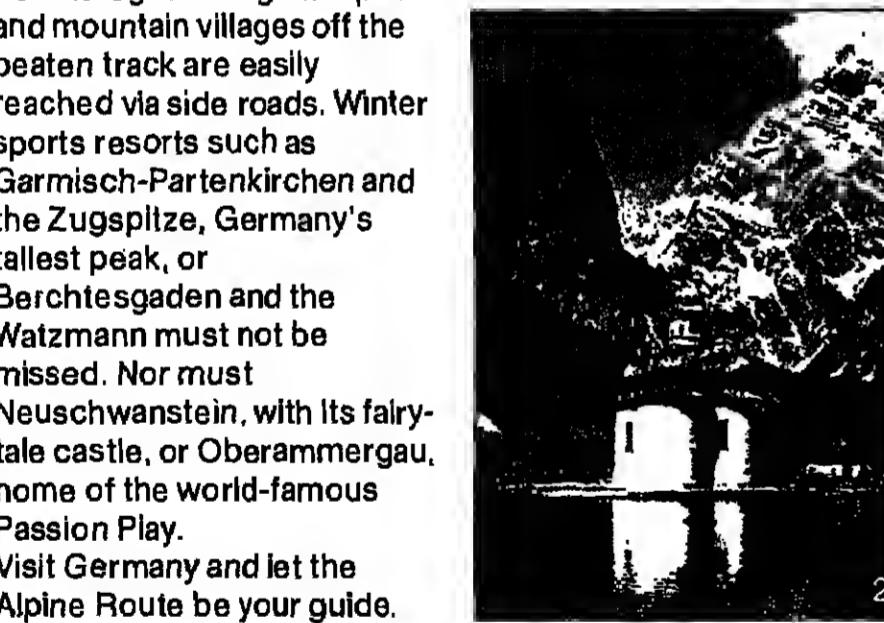
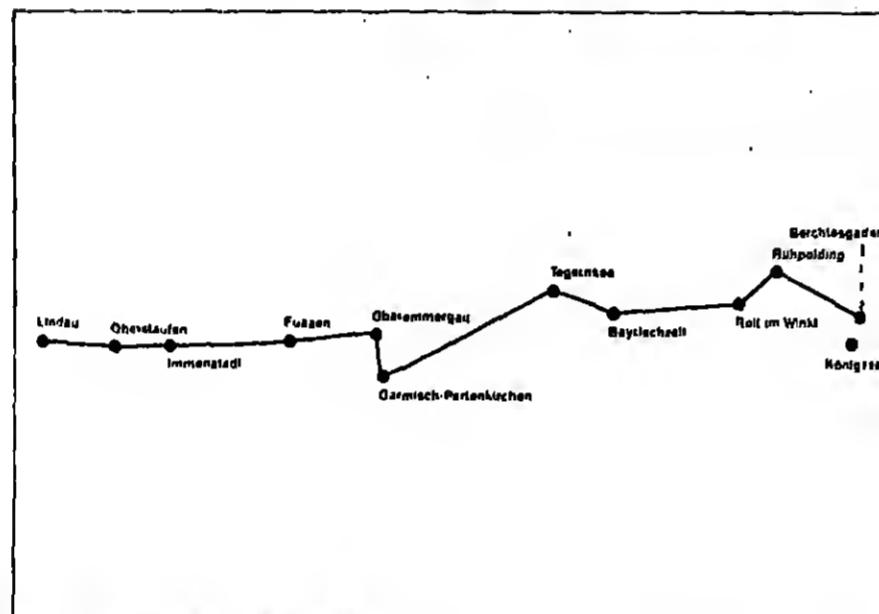
In Germany's deep south viewpoints everywhere beckon you to stop and look. From Lindau on Lake

Constance you pass through the western Allgäu plateau to the Allgäu uplands and the Berchtesgaden region. Spas and mountain villages off the beaten track are easily reached via side roads. Winter sports resorts such as Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the Zugspitze, Germany's tallest peak, or Berchtesgaden and the Watzmann must not be missed. Nor must Neuschwanstein, with its fairytale castle, or Oberammergau, home of the world-famous Passion Play.

Visit Germany and let the Alpine Route be your guide.

- 1 Oberammergau
- 2 Königssee
- 3 Lindau
- 4 Neuschwanstein Castle

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Euro Summit shows limits to any leap forward

Hannoversche Allgemeine

There was no great leap forward at the Rhodes meeting of the heads of state and government of the 12 European Community member-states.

In route to the single internal market they took time off for a half-way mark reappraisal of the situation.

In the temperate Greek island climate they reviewed progress to date, took a closer look at their 1992 internal market deadline and otherwise contented themselves with non-committal declarations of intent.

After their successful marathon meetings in Brussels and Hanover they can hardly be begrimed having allowed themselves to be gilded this time by the *genus-inerit to have concentrated on the art of non-committal evanescence* by which the Ancient Greeks set such store.

Even so, the European Community has no reason for resting on its laurels.

So far the Twelve have kept in the schedule and at half-way mark have passed roughly 50 per cent of the legislation needed for the single internal market.

Reciprocal recognition of university degrees, deregulation of capital movement and perceptible progress in deregulating public sector contracts and reaching agreement on European standards are undoubtedly a firm foundation for further moves toward integration.

Taken together with the reform of the common agricultural policy, the system of Community finances and structural policy, they are even more promising. The 1992 deadline has lent the Community unforeseen impetus.

Within a few years Euroselementis has been superseded by a Eurdynamism which has made the process of European integration irreversible.

The European Internal market is exercising a growing external effect, and not just on the EFTA countries, which feel increasingly geared to the European Community.

The Community is seen more and more clearly all over the world as an economic and political force to be reckoned with. The countries of Eastern Europe have sounded out the prospects of cooperation in Brussels.

The Americans and Japanese are gearing up, with mixed feelings, for tougher European competition — by setting up a free trade zone comprising the United States and Canada, for instance.

Their fears and expectations seem wildly exaggerated when viewed from the European vantage point. European

Community leaders reiterated at the Rhodes summit that they have no intention of setting up a "Fortress Europe."

As for the larger European market without frontiers to which everyone refers and which all member-countries are said to favour, it so far resembles nothing so much as a castle in the air.

The highest hurdles en route to the promised internal market have yet to be cleared. They include fiscal harmonisation, monetary cooperation, welfare policy and the abolition of border controls.

The Rhodes summit showed yet again that Britain's Margaret Thatcher is determined to prevent her partners in Europe from venturing too great a leap forward.

At this fairly early stage in the debate the others were right not to embark on a fundamental dispute with Mrs Thatcher on the Community's political objectives, on a European central bank, the "social dimension" or the abolition of border controls.

There would have been far too great a risk of top-level political disputes blocking any and all specific steps forward.

Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, is well aware that this British bastion cannot be taken by storm.

So, like the Turks who besieged the bastion of the Knights of St John where the European summit was held, Mr Delors has opted in favour of the lenient approach of trying to breach the Iron Lady's defences by gradually submitting specific, realistic, individual proposals designed to lend the Internal market its social dimension.

It would have been unwise to discuss the abolition of border controls at this stage. In two or three years, when the internal market is more cohesive and even more breaches have been made in the British bastion, the discussion will take a course entirely different from the shapely it would have taken in Rhodes.

The summit's failure to seriously discuss the proposed harmonisation of indirect taxes was, in contrast, incomprehensible, especially as the Commission's proposals had been presented and were available for debate.

The Finance Ministers of the Twelve have already debated them in detail.

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Cross Rhodes. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (left) and Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl at the Summit.

New Soviet guidelines with the same old ideas

Frankfurter Allgemeine

The good news is that Soviet foreign policy is being redefined on a moderate and level-headed basis. The bad news is that militarily the Soviet Union has not gone in for reduction. So Soviet "new thinking" is no different from the old.

With unabated energy the Red Army continues to be pelted with heavy weapons for its "Western war theatre" while the Soviet air force is equipped with modern fighter bombers.

The same is true of the medium-range missiles that are being scrapped in accordance with the INF Treaty; they are being replaced by long- and short-range systems.

The latest military balance issued by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, leaves no doubt in all these points, and the Soviet military are not even hinting to make any claims to the contrary.

The Soviet Union's surprise attack or ground-gaining operation capability has not been reduced in the least.

Soviet "new thinking" has not, either than by way of semi-official ideas, brought about any change in Westpolitik with regard to Berlin and Germany.

This was last unmistakably apparent during Chancellor Kohl's visit to the

Kremlin, and the aim of this emphasis was not just to please Herr Honecker and keep the GDR quiet.

There can no longer, since Mr Gorbachev's after-dinner speech in Moscow, be any question of opportunities having been missed on the German Question.

Since Mr Gorbachev borrowed the metaphor from Mr Brezhnev the "common house" of Europe has been given neither a new and more pleasing ground plan nor more comfortable furniture.

There can only be any substantial change once the Kremlin leaders are agreed on three points:

- that the process of integration in Western Europe is making headway;
- that the US and Canadian military presence in Europe remains indispensable;
- and that nuclear weapons continue to be needed to keep Europe's architecture stable.

1992 will mark not a conclusion to Western European integration but an important stepping stone on the road to a prosperity zone of industrial democracies in Europe.

The superiority of the socialist market economy and Western technology have already forced the Soviet leaders to realise that 70 years of revolution were in vain.

The peaceful dynamism of a united Western Europe can be sure to intensify its intellectual and material attraction for Eastern Central Europe.

Realists in the Kremlin can no longer fail to stem the tide of this trend or to prevent it. Their common objective must

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■ SECURITY

Spending dominates defence agenda

Nato Defence Ministers met in Brussels for a two-day autumn conference dealing mainly with sharing the burden of military spending.

The United States, with its heavy budget and foreign trade deficits, is keener than ever to see Western Europe make a more substantial contribution toward the cost of defending the Continent.

A report submitted to the conference assessed the contribution made by individual countries and outlined sectors in which improvements were felt to be possible.

Eurogroup Defence Ministers agreed in preparatory consultations to play a comprehensive and constructive role in strengthening Nato's defence capability.

But they strongly rejected the US accusation that their contribution toward joint defence was inadequate.

The 12 Defence Ministers of Eurogroup member-countries launched an information campaign in which they underscored their contribution within Nato.

"They distributed a brochure entitled 'Burden Sharing — The European View' in which figures were quoted to illustrate their claim that Europe and Turkey have shouldered most of the burden of their conventional defence."

The brochure heightened the impression that the North Atlantic pact is heading for a serious transatlantic clash over burden sharing.

It notes that in the European and Turkish sectors of Nato 95 per cent of divisions, 90 per cent of troops and artillery, 80 per cent of tanks and combat aircraft and 65 per cent of larger warships are locally supplied.

If a state of emergency were to arise the United States could mobilise 3.8 million men, whereas Europe could mobilise seven million.

Between 1970 and 1987 Europe is said to have increased its defence spending by 34 per cent on average and in real, i.e. inflation-adjusted terms.

America, in contrast, is said to have increased its defense spending by only 15 per cent over the same period — and to have reduced its troop strength in Europe, whereas Europe had increased its service manpower.

The brochure deals in detail with the extent to which the Federal Republic of Germany is affected by foreign troops and manoeuvres.

Nato is said to hold 85 larger and about 5,000 smaller-scale military exercises a year in Germany, not to mention 500,000 flight movements by military aircraft.

At talks that traditionally begin the

Continued from page 1

The most controversial items have been identified.

No-one who calls to mind the tax reform debate in the Federal Republic of Germany will fail to appreciate how difficult it is to reform tax systems. Each and every change has profound effects on budgets and national economies.

No-one will harbour illusions that the proposed tax harmonisation can be implemented in a matter of months, and time is short. In the final analysis the European Community now has only two years left if it is to reach agreement in time for its 1992 deadline.

Thomas Gack
(Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 1 December 1988)



New statistics reveal military strengths

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

Nato secretary-general Manfred Wörner (left) and Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Herr Wörner was playing an official visit to Bonn. See Perspective, page 6. (Photo: dpa)

The comparative statistics for Nato and the Warsaw Pact countries released in Nato capitals are the first co-ordinated data comparison Nato has issued since 1984.

As usual, the East Bloc is found to be much superior in weapons for launching an attack or an invasion.

Nato has drawn up the statistics to underline its view that the Warsaw Pact must make much bigger concessions than the West at the proposed conventional disarmament talks to strike a balance in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.

The Nato report, which is said to be based on the latest Western figures and on estimates where the East is concerned, lists arms and manpower by country for the first time.

In main battle tanks, for instance, the Federal Republic heads the list in the West, with 4,330, followed by Turkey with 3,000, while in the East the Soviet Union, with 37,000 tanks, comes well ahead of Czechoslovakia, 3,800; Poland, 3,400; and East Germany, 3,000.

The Federal Republic leads the West in armoured infantry vehicles too, while its artillery firepower is second only to Turkey's. As for helicopters and combat aircraft, the Federal Republic is outnumbered in Western Europe by the United States.

Nato is worried by the Warsaw Pact's enormous superiority in tanks, artillery and engineering corps strength and by the threat it poses to the West.

The latest figures, which have been submitted to all 35 countries associated with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), is intended to prompt the East to be more "transparent" and release detailed figures on its arms and manpower in time for the forthcoming disarmament talks.

Nato secretary-general Manfred Wörner has appealed to Mr Gorbachov, the Soviet leader, to let actions follow his words and show earnest on the reduction in conventional armaments which he proposed.

Theatre nuclear weapons must and will be reduced to a reasonable and adequate level, but the stabilising effect of nuclear weapons in and for Europe must, on the other hand, he retained.

Internal change in the Soviet Union may have overlooked the fact that America's role in Europe was more than mere containment and a military guarantee; it overcame previous European conflicts and disputes, lent expression to economic interdependence and was a means of maintaining international political stability.

This threat is accentuated by foreign policy change, especially in Eastern Central Europe, not yet having begun.

The West has an interest in preventing the Gorbachov revolution from above. Whether it can help is another matter.

But the West's task can not be to spare Soviet leaders the choice between guns and butter. Help must first and foremost come from within.

Michael Stürmer
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 1 December 1988)

■ BONN

Chancellor risks party row in choice of minister

Chancellor Kohl has again gone outside the Bundestag (Parliament) to choose a cabinet minister. Ursula-Maria Lehr, a university professor, takes over the portfolio of Family Affairs in place of Rita Süssmuth, who is now the Speaker. The Chancellor is the only cabinet member appointed by the Bundestag. He can pick ministers from outside the Bundestag.

The CDU leader was accused at the time of dropping his fellow-Christian Democrat like a hot potato. Would he be similarly accused in Herr Jenninger's case?

Herr Jenninger has certainly received bugs full of mail from correspondents who feel his speech was honourable and merely inept in its delivery.

Regardless of CDU criticism of the speed at which the Chancellor disposed of the Speaker — en route between Washington and New York — Herr Jenninger's resignation was right and indispensable.

What might the public reaction have been if he had hesitated? All he can fairly be accused of is failure to satisfactorily explain his reasons in a wider public.

His success in the difficult search for a successor to Frau Süssmuth is partly due to the surprise factor. Professor Lehr is a newcomer to the political stage in Bonn, and an academic.

The Chancellor is evidently willing to run the gauntlet of dissatisfaction in the parliamentary party, which has again been ignored in the choice of a Cabinet Minister.

Herr Kohl's inclination to hire people who are not involved in federal politics has become such a habit that it might seem that a Christian Democrat who aims to get into Parliament is putting himself or herself at a disadvantage.

But the Chancellor can't be accused of using the ranks of politicians in the *Lilienthal* to fill his cabinet ranks. If he did that, his room for choice would soon be narrow.

Herr Kohl is probably least satisfied by the trouble he may have with the parliamentary party. At present it cannot afford even a limited clash with the Chancellor, who is its very backbone.

The party leadership at both Federal and Land government level is increasingly accused of having completely lost



Wita, mother and now minister ... Ursula Lehr. (Photo: Poly-Press)

touch with reality. Is that an inevitable consequence of wielded power?

The Chancellor noted with approval the comment by a Jung Union speaker at the youth organisation's Baden-Baden conference that the Borsig affair could recur anywhere at any time.

What the speaker meant was not the arbitrary way in which Premiers who wielded almost unlimited power tended to govern but the party's inability to exercise effective control over the powers that be.

Decision-making processes are increasingly taking place behind closed doors.

As the Chancellor was particularly secretive in the present case there is no way of telling exactly why he decided to appoint Ursula-Maria Lehr as Family Affairs Minister.

There is no clear yardstick of suitability for the portfolio — other, perhaps, than the general explanation that a gerontologist is an apt choice in a country where the aged are steadily growing in number and young people growing fewer and fewer.

Klaus Dreher
(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 30 November 1988)

An academic comes into the cabinet

Family Affairs Minister Ursula Lehr is a university don who has specialised throughout her academic life in the family, in the changing role and self-evaluation of women and in the aged.

She has published numerous field reports indicating how society has changed and is changing. She was one of the first research scientists in the country to deal with the psychology and situation of old people.

She sees old age as an opportunity and as a challenge. She is neither pessimistic nor resigned in her assessment of the situation.

She constantly reaffirms her view that old age need not be tantamount to being out of the running, that it can be productive and that retirement need not be equated with inactivity.

"Longevity imposes obligations on us all," she says.

She is no less well-prepared to take over at the Ministry of Youth, Family Affairs and Health than Rita Süssmuth was before her, and her published work shows she shares Frau Süssmuth's views.

Both have constantly called for the family to be strengthened as an institution and for women to be able both to work and have a family if they want to.

She soon realised that ways of life were changing in a society where the proportion of older people was steadily increasing.

She has demolished many long-standing views and prejudices while regularly submitting encouraging new ideas about approaches to living.

She wrote her second PhD thesis (the one German academics need to qualify as a professor) in the late 1960s on Women at Work, and she has supplied many factual arguments in favour of work and a family being reconcilable.

She has set a personal example as a wife and mother of two sons. She showed in one work that a satisfied working mother was in many cases better for her child than a dissatisfied housewife.

She has always strongly favoured men doing more housework. The dual role of work and housework must not be left to women alone.

Ursula Lehr, 58, comes from a Roman Catholic home. Her father was a banker. She took her *Abitur*, or higher school certificate, in Offenbach and studied in Bonn, where she was awarded her first chair in development psychology.

In 1971 she switched to Cologne and has taught and conducted research since 1985 at Heidelberg University as head of the gerontology department.

Her public appearances at congresses and in platform debates have invariably shown her to be a level-headed, authoritative person. She has a knack of soberly, and at times stubbornly, persuading others to change their minds.

She is widely versed in other aspects of health policy, which should stand her in good stead at the Ministry.

Frau Süssmuth left off in her work on behalf of the family in general and of women in particular.

Maria Frits
(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
für Deutschland, 30 November 1988)

Politicians are hanging on too long instead of handing over to younger people, say young members of the conservative union parties.

The congress of the Jung Union, the youth wing of the CDU/CSU, says that older politicians are keeping the young out of the running for office.

The CDU/CSU's elected representatives are, on average, 50-year-olds. Members of CDU/CSU governments also tend to be about that age.

But, on the other hand, young people with political ambitions do not look impressive when they by belly-ache this way. The younger generation has never been granted office on a silver platter.

Helmut Kohl may have been elected Prime Minister of the Rhineland-Palatinate, but he is not the top will be blocked for a long time unless they speak out.

The gap between present leaders and the younger generation will be too wide if today's 50-year-olds stay put for a further 15 to 20 years. . .

By holding on to their jobs they will keep younger people out of the running for power, responsibility, office (and well-paid jobs). That cannot be good for relations between politicians and the younger generation.

The only contribution it can claim to have made toward solving the conflict that began with Speaker Philipp Jenninger's unfortunate speech to the Bundestag on the 50th anniversary of the Kristallnacht is that its leader and some of its members refused to stand for Speaker in Herr Jenninger's place.

The Chancellor persuaded Herr Jenninger to resign. He persuaded Frau Süssmuth to take over as Speaker. Professor Lehr wins his choice as Family Affairs Minister to take over from Frau Süssmuth.

He did so at a pace that party-political onlookers noted with bated breath. When he presented his new Minister, ending the vacuum of empty chairs, MPs were still busy pondering over how the crisis had begun.

The 'party' was worried Herr Kohl

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■ GERMANY

East Berlin begins the bullying again

The East Berlin government has begun bullying its critics again. Security police are using none-too-subtle means to silence opposition. The government has even banned a Soviet magazine and some Soviet films. Why? Because the ageing members of East Berlin's government are trying to prevent any discussion about the Stalin era or about any alteration in the history of the Communist Party. In this article, Claus Wettermann, writing in the Cologne daily, the *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, takes the occasion of Chancellor Kohl's state-of-the-nation speech to look at what is happening in East Germany.

In recent years, the Chancellor's state of the nation address has presented the relationship between the Federal Republic and East Germany in a favourable light.

For the time being, therefore, Bonn will have to continue trying to come to some arrangement with Honecker and his old guard.

The end of the Honecker era, which could begin at a Communist Party conference in 1990, is unlikely to usher in a new era of reform.

There is no one in sight among the candidates seriously considered for the succession who might be more favourable towards Gorbachov-style reforms.

Apart from the strained atmosphere, East Germany's internal problems would not at first glance appear to have that much influence on the relationship between the two Germanies needs.

After East Berlin party chief Frieder Hicker visited the Federal Republic in September last year, the East's government made tentative efforts to make life a bit easier for groups critical of it — and the atmosphere between the two Germanies markedly improved.

Now it's back to square one. Security police are heavy-handedly oppressing human rights campaigners who are calling for greater freedom and reforms in line with the new Soviet model.

Censorship of religious texts and prayers are reminiscent of the dark days of the ill-fated struggle between the Church and the state.

East Berlin has even banned a Soviet publication called *Sputnik*, which is favourable towards glasnost — a particularly restrictive aspect of the trench warfare being conducted against liberal tendencies. Several Soviet films have also been banned.

Honecker's regime hopes that what it is doing will win in the end any attempt to discuss the crimes of the Stalin era and the shortcomings of the Communist past.

At the same time Honecker has all too demonstratively allied himself with Romania's despotic leader, Nicolae Ceausescu.

Honecker couldn't have done more to dissociate himself from Moscow and those reformers who have started to take up Gorbachov's ideas in most of the other Eastern European neighbouring Eastern European countries.

Honecker and his followers apparently feel so strong — or perhaps it is uncertain? — that they are determined to prevent any spreading of glasnost and perestroika in East Germany by taking on Moscow head-on.

Together with the nationalities conflict and the struggle against ideological opponents in the Soviet Union itself, this challenge from a brother nation comes at an

inopportune moment for Mikhail Gorbachov.

Is the East German Communist Party perhaps hoping that Gorbachov's opponents will eventually gain the upper hand?

By strictly rejecting reforms with such inflexibility the old men in East Berlin are only fanning the flames of critical opposition in their own country.

Already faced by food supply problems the East German population is becoming increasingly disappointed, embittered about the policies pursued by their leaders. In some cases the result is resignation and apathy.

This discontentment is not only reflected in the generally silent protest action, but also in the growing desire to legally or illegally leave the country for good.

Some of the younger members of the Communist Party are also unhappy about the current disavowal of Moscow's reform policies, although there is no sign of an organised rebellion.

There are rumours and speculations about a replacement of Honecker, who is 76, in the near future.

His power base does not appear to be so stable as it was a year ago and his public appearances show that age is taking its toll.

For the time being, therefore, Bonn will have to continue trying to come to some arrangement with Honecker and his old guard.

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New generation 'rejecting communist propaganda'

East Germans are becoming less and less afraid of facing the facts and openly admitting the contradiction between ideological claims and the harsh realities of life under communist regime, says the Mayor of West Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen. In a speech in the Bundestag in Bonn, Diepgen said that decades of socialist education had been unable to guarantee loyalty to the regime. This report was written by Bernd Brügge for the *Lübecker Nachrichten*.

This sense. And many of this generation saw the realities and either opposed the regime openly or retreated into a mood of resignation. This was one reason for a growing exodus in the West. Many of those who could not get out sought an "inner exile" or practised civil disobedience. The result was that East Germany was on the point of losing the services of some of its best thinkers. This report was written by Bernd Brügge for the *Lübecker Nachrichten*.

way in which the East Berlin leadership is trying to prevent any liberalisation along Soviet lines.

In his "Report on the State of the GDR" Diepgen outlined the contradictions. On the one hand, an increase in coercive measures by the state security police; on the other, liberalisation in the legal policy field.

On the one hand, official permission to perform critical plays in East German theatres; on the other, petty-minded censorship.

On the one hand, a critical appraisal of great personalities such as Luther and Bismarck; on the other, a refusal to discuss controversial questions of contemporary history such as the Hitler-Stalin pact.

On the one hand, a toleration of the reception of western television and, on the other, a ban on certain Soviet films.

Although it is often claimed that the situation in East Germany cannot be compared with the situation in the Soviet Union, the sight of long queues outside of the shops is no longer a rarity.

Diepgen only touched on the possible reasons for the growing isolation of the East German regime.

At a much later stage than in the West, he said, the East is experiencing an alternation of generations.

The decades of socialist education have been unable to guarantee loyalty to the regime. On the contrary, the propaganda has provoked criticism.

According to Diepgen the younger generation in East Germany is "in the good sense — an un-educated generation."

East Germans are becoming less and less afraid of facing facts and openly admitting the contradiction between ideological claims and harsh realities of socialism in its present form.

Their reaction fluctuates between opposition and resignation, and Diepgen is convinced that this is one of the major reasons for the rising growing exodus to the West.

Many East Germans who are not granted an exit permit seek inner exile and demonstrate civil disobedience.

In Diepgen's words, East Germany is on the verge of losing some of its best "thinkers" as a result of "inward and outward emigration".

None of the Deutschlandpolitik experts gathered in the Bundestag contradicted this analysis.

What's more, they also supported the conclusions Diepgen drew for activities inside and outside the realm of politics.

"Don't forget us. This is a sentence which every West German who speaks with Germans in the GDR hears. We must take this reminder more seriously."

Bernd Brügge

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Cologne, 29 November 1988)

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 2 December 1988)

■ PERSPECTIVE

US entitled to ask Germans to pay more towards Euro defence, says Wörner

The Americans are entitled to ask why a wealthy Germany should not pay more towards the cost of defence in Europe, says Manfred Wörner, secretary-general of Nato and a former Bonn Defence Minister. He told the business weekly, *Wirtschaftswoche*.

Wörner: that an independent system of defence must be paid for to keep peace and support policies of disarmament control. But he warned that military potential continued to grow in the Soviet Union: "Gorbachov has not yet scrapped a single tank or withdrawn a single soldier. He should do what the Chinese did. They cut their army by a million in 10 years." On the question of Soviet intentions, Wörner said: "Intentions can change from one day to the next. Leaders can be replaced."

A: In the alliance there are, of course, varying views.

Incidentally, I find that the dramatisation of such a decision does not do justice to the actual situation.

Wörner: Our significance and our role in the alliance has become more visible.

Q: But your successor as Defence Minister, Rupert Scholz, would apparently like to reduce Bonn's Nato commitments — the Bundeswehr troop strength, for example.

As in accordance with his role the secretary-general of the alliance does not comment on national decisions.

As secretary-general, however, I hope that the contribution of the Federal Republic of Germany to the alliance will remain undiminished. Indeed, that will be stepped up in parts.

Q: Even during Chancellor Kohl's visit to Moscow attempts were made to stall the modernisation discussion. But you were able to prevent this.

A: I am responsible for making sure that the alliance carefully considers the decisions needed and takes them in time.

Together with the ministers of the alliance I ensured that the decision-making process continued both with respect to an overall concept and to the question of a possible modernisation.

Q: Allow us to take up the second aspect, the political contribution.

Officially, Bonn is waiting for an overall concept for armament and disarmament. Bonn Foreign Minister

Genscher, however, has given to understand that a modernisation of nuclear weapons runs contrary to the spirit of the agreement on short-range missiles.

Are you again obliged to say I'd like to comment but I'm not allowed to?

A: No, I gather from what Chanceller Kohl and others have said that Germany still has an interest in an overall concept. I am certain that the Federal Republic will play its part in ensuring that this overall concept materialises on time.

Q: Even during Chancellor Kohl's visit to Moscow attempts were made to stall the modernisation discussion. But you were able to prevent this.

A: I am responsible for making sure that the alliance carefully considers the decisions needed and takes them in time.

This applies to the strength and operational capacity of the Bundeswehr as well as to the political contribution.

Q: Allow us to take up the second aspect, the political contribution.

Q: Now a number of other European governments are also faced by difficulties regarding the modernisation of nuclear weapons.

What are your comments on a claim made by an influential general in the Bundeswehr after Helmut Kohl's return from Moscow that the Bundeswehr's stereotypical image of the enemy is now starting to change?

A: The Bundeswehr has never needed such an image. Nato was interested in relaxing East-West relations and helped bring about this change. Without Nato there would be no glasnost or perestroika.

Nato doesn't need false concepts of threat. For people in Germany the main threat is the danger of war, and at the moment this does not exist. Gorbachov has got other worries.

When we talk about threat we do not mean intentions but military potential. And it continues to grow in the Soviet Union.

Gorbachov has not scrapped a single tank yet or withdrawn a single soldier.

He should follow the example of the Chinese, who reduced the size of their army by a million in 10 years.

Q: The German population is more interested in Soviet intentions ...

A: Intentions can change from one day to the next. Leaders can be replaced — that's something we cannot influence.

We would be doing nobody, including Gorbachov, a favour by unilaterally reducing our defence efforts.

Q: Bonn's defence budget is at its lowest level since 1982. Where is the money for the burden-sharing envisaged by Washington going to come from?

A: I expect from all political leaders in

the alliance member states, including the Federal Republic of Germany, not to ask what people just happen to be thinking at the moment, but that they exercise political leadership.

They must explain to the population that we must sustain an independent system of defence if we want to preserve peace and support policies of change and disarmament control.

Isn't that a contradiction in terms?

A: It only seems to be. When arms control negotiations have been successful the armament burdens can be reduced. If need be, however, unpopular decisions must be taken.

Q: What does the Nato secretary-general think about the idea of a Europeanisation of security policy, as advocated, for example, by the CDU member of the Bundestag Karl Lauter?

A: I am firmly convinced that a strengthening of Europe is in the interest of the alliance as a whole. A stronger Europe is better for the alliance than a weaker Europe. Just as a stronger America is better, European political cooperation, however, must be compatible with the general interest of the alliance.

Q: What does that mean?

A: It must be conducive and not detrimental to American engagement in Europe. Notions of an independent European defence are unrealistic and even dangerous. We should not create a club within a club.

In the final analysis, however, all European members of Nato support this European Nato cornerstone.

Q: But France has regularly declared that it would not make use of nuclear weapons to save, say, Bonn ...

A: I shall not comment on the opinion of the French president. France defines its own nuclear policy in line with its own sovereign ideas. France is an extremely loyal member of the political alliance.

Q: Since the death of Franz Josef Strauss, one of the most active advocates of the European Fighter Aircraft, there are growing signs that this project may in the end fail. How do you rate the consequences of such a decision for European defence?

A: This is another attempt to involve me in a controversial national policy issue. I cannot comment on it.

Q: And the European dimension?

A: The secretary-general is not responsible for the success or failure of a project but for security. Which aircraft Europeans buy is not a matter for him.

Q: Not only the example of the European Fighter Aircraft shows that sophisticated technology makes weapons systems increasingly expensive. How can this trend be reversed?

A: Only by greater cooperation, which must begin in the alliance-wide development. This is the only method. It is a difficult and bumpy road and we have only made a little headway so far.

The necessity of dwindling defence budgets may even lead to the virtue of economising by cooperation.

Q: In the field of electronics in general the prices are tumbling. Only the weapon systems with their increasing amount of electronic equipment are becoming more and more expensive.

A: In return, however, the efficiency of these weapon systems is much greater.

Compare a modern aircraft, for example, with the kind of aircraft I even flew myself, the G 91 or the Tornado.

What is more, one must remember that East and West face the same problem. Mikhail Gorbachov has also started to do some exact calculating.

Friedrich Thelen/Roland Tichy
(*Wirtschaftswoche*, Düsseldorf,
25 November 1988)

Politics at first hand

Detailed and objective information is what you need if you are to hold your own on politics and world affairs: facts

■ FINANCE

Germany shoots to top of corporation tax league in spite of reductions

Tax reductions are about to catapult German business into the position of being the highest-taxed in the industrialised world.

The reason for this apparent contradiction is that Austria, which used to lead the tax league, is to slash its corporation tax at the same time — by enough to push it down the list.

The Bonn reforms bring corporation tax down from 56 per cent to 50 per cent. Total tax on profits, including trade tax and property tax, will drop from 70 to 66 per cent.

By comparison, Chancellor Franz Vranitzky's socialist government in Vienna is reducing corporation tax from 55 to 30 per cent. The entire system is also being simplified and the tax-free allowance doubled.

Until now, Austria has been the only country with a higher corporation taxes than Germany.

The Austrian reform means that companies will only pay about half as much as they used to. The rate is still high by international standards, but no longer crippling.

HDM chief Hans-Olaf Henkel said that business profits were burdened in three ways: working time, wages and taxes. Henkel has been vocal in the debate on the advantages and disadvantages of the Federal Republic as a centre for industrial and commercial operations.

The Institute for German Industry, Cologne, closely connected with German industry generally, has now produced a new international taxation comparison, which presents the Federal Republic in anything but an advantageous light.

Businessmen in Britain, Spain and the Netherlands are taxed the lowest at 35 per cent.

In all three countries, incidentally, companies do not have to pay tax when they have made no profits — such as the trading capital tax payable in the Federal Republic.

According to the Cologne institute Switzerland is also a country where very low corporate taxes are levied. West German businessmen pay twice as much tax as their Swiss colleagues.

Compared with the taxes paid by the Federal Republic's competitors, German taxes are on average 21 per cent higher.

The Cologne institute has established that not only in Austria have companies been given greater tax relief in the Federal Republic. The institute's investigations showed that:

- In the Netherlands the rate of corporation tax was reduced from 42 to 35 per cent on 1 October this year.

- The rate has been reduced by a number of stages in Britain, the last time in 1986 from 50 to 35 per cent. Small businesses with profits less than £100,000 only have to pay 25 per cent tax.

- In the United States corporation tax was reduced from 46 per cent to 34 per cent last year, but at the same time a whole series of tax benefits were abolished.

- In Canada corporation tax has been reduced in two stages from 46 to 38 per cent.

Other countries are planning similar measures. In Japan, for instance, companies have to pay 42 per cent of their



Die Welt

WORLDWIDE

■ THE ARTS

Attaining Esoteric Knowledge through the True Word



the cosmos and equally for the spiritual development of men.

The Buddha at the centre of the mandala is a cult figure and embodies the principle of Buddhist Teaching.

This can be seen in the altars built for the exhibition as well as in the meditation of art works and ritual objects.

This is exemplified magnificently by the "Shingon — The Art of Esoteric Buddhism in Japan" exhibition in the East-Asian Museum in Cologne.

The strangeness of cult art works impresses the more one tries to familiarise oneself with their contents and importance.

Buddhism came to Japan from India via China and Korea. First contacts were made in 525 AD, before the development of the Shingon School.

The Shingon sect (True Word) was founded by Kobo Daishi (774-835). Fundamentally it is a mystical, esoteric form of Buddhism. It teaches that the Buddha is at the heart of the universe and is latent in some way in all living beings.

Man is made aware of this through special rituals — chanting mystical syllables, ritual finger-twisting, magical spells, yoga concentration and the manipulation of symbolic utensils.

In Shingon art a development began between the 9th and 14th centuries whose significance to the uninitiated remains a mystery.

This exclusive quality of Buddhism in Japan is revealed in an accompanying photographic exhibition entitled "Rituals on the Holy Mount Koya-san." The Shingon sect established its headquarters deep in the mountains on Mount Koya near Kyoto and it became a repository of a great collection of art.

The main exhibition is made up of 90 cult figures, scrolls and ritual objects.

Visitors are deterred from coming to hasty conclusions, for the photographs, which Toshifumi Ike has selected, are based on his own experiences in meditation. If he had not for a long time lived in a monastery himself he would never have been given permission to display them.

The holy number in Esoteric Buddhism in Japan is five. Five, for instance, appears in the reliquary, whose form, from below upwards, symbolises Earth, Water, Fire, Wind or Air and the Ether or Space.

There are also five Buddhas of Esoteric Knowledge; the central figure of Daisho-Nyoirai, enthroned, larger than the four accompanying figures, in the centre of a system of coordinates, corresponding to the four points of the compass and their centre, which is of particular importance.

There are Goethe Institutes in Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary, and negotiations are underway for establishing them in Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

The aim of the Institute in Peking is "promoting the German language in China."

The arrangement of the five Buddhas of Esoteric Knowledge is symbolically in union with nature.

The shapes of the mandalas — mandalas are symbols of a cosmic order, symbols of the way of knowledge and redemption — stand for the world, for

the cosmos and equally for the spiritual development of men.

The Buddha at the centre of the mandala is a cult figure and embodies the principle of Buddhist Teaching.

This can be seen in the altars built for the exhibition as well as in the meditation of art works and ritual objects.

In the Shingon sect instead of god-like figures, instead of representations of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas, who accompany him, support him, who help men in the Buddhist Teaching of unity with the cosmos, with the world and oneself, there are discs which represent embryonic syllables, indications of the gods in abbreviated form.

The Western visitor, to whom these teachings are foreign, should realise that the evil faces of the divinities are meant not for believers but for their enemies, who seek to deter the believer from his way.

It is obvious that a disciplined, religious esoteric teaching system produces a special form of art.

One can only get a rough idea of the meaning and significance of this if one tries to comprehend, modestly and as rationally as possible, the extreme complications of "Shingon."

Even the proportions have a deep significance and are in no way only stylistic features, even if they have to a considerable extent had influence in art beyond Japan.

The influence of the proportions and representation, so perfect to Western eyes, comes from a foreign, very distant world, to which the outsider is denied access.

The King of Knowledge, Fudo, is seen as the central figure, who can be terrifying. He carries a sword and a lasso in his hands. The sword is a symbol of knowledge, the lasso, the "cord" for binding evil influences.

The Kings are helpers for the Buddha of Esoteric Knowledge. The force and the spiritual discipline, which are

18th century (Chinoiseries in Europe)

was not just the result of trade with Asia. The eye in the hand, a typically surrealistic motive, is to be found again in this exhibition: admittedly not with only one or two hands with eyes, but in the form of the Bodhisattva Senjo-Kannon from a group of three with the King of Knowledge Fudo and the Watchman of the World Bishamonten. Senjo-Kannon, "the Thousand-armed," has here 42 hands and in each hand a small eye. The visitor should not spring to hasty conclusions here — they are "the Thousand Eyes of Compassion" of a divinity, who will assist man to redemption.

There are five Buddhas of Esoteric Knowledge and five Kings of Esoteric Knowledge, whose anger is directed against everyone and everything, which stands in the way of man on his path to Enlightenment.

The influence this teaching has had on culture and life in Asia and also Japan should not be underestimated.

The rigorous hierarchy of Shingon teaching extends far behind religion and art.

The excellent catalogue costs DM 38, and there is a very helpful short guide for DM 5.

Doris Schmidt

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 18 November 1988)

ness for many institutions in China. The head of the Goethe Institute, Herr Kahn-Ackermann, wants to improve the standard of German teaching in the coming year, working together with the Sino-German Society.

There are at present about 3,000 Chinese scientists and students studying in the Federal Republic, and 220 German scientists and students in China.

The expectations Chinese have of the Institute can only be disappointed by the China-centred attitude of Chinese officials. There is considerable good will on the German side to fulfill these expectations.

Herr Kahn-Ackermann, 42, has worked and taught in China for a long time. He has translated Chinese writers such as Zengzi into German.

In his speech he compared the opening of the Goethe Institute with his Chinese wife giving birth to their child a few days before. His speech increased Chinese goodwill towards him, and it was well applauded when he ended.

There are six other Germans at the Institute to help Kahn-Ackermann. His deputy, and this is a new departure for Goethe Institutes, is Chinese. According to his contract he is there to support the head, not to interfere. He will certainly be helpful in dealing with the bureaucracy.

The Chinese have requested that only the language as such should be taught, not "culture". If possible, for culture could be political.

Just how the language can be separated from culture is a secret for Chinese sophists.

The actual number is far more than this, however, for foreign language teaching has become a profitable busi-

ness for many institutions in China. The head of the Goethe Institute, Herr Kahn-Ackermann, wants to improve the standard of German teaching in the coming year, working together with the Sino-German Society.

There were also a lot of categories missing among the first European film prizes that are very much a part of the film of the film; documentaries, cutting, costume designer, make-up and so on.

The show, transmitted live to many European countries, was clumsily presented. There was also none of the excitement of the Oscar awards from which so much had been taken over, such as the procedure for handing over the prizes, the presentation of the awards by different stars, who announced: "The winner is..."

Continued on page 11.



One of the five Buddhas of Esoteric Knowledge. Painted wood, 91.2 cm high, Japan 12th C AD. (Photo Catalogue)

hidden in the Shingon teaching, cannot be perceived as being in form and artistic quality of the very first rank by the uninformed and nothing can be inferred of its aesthetics.

One does not attain Esoteric Knowledge without teaching, without practice and initiation.

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Doris Schmidt

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 18 November 1988)

Cultural optimism as German centre opens in Peking



Apart of the bureaucracy in Peking is suspicious of foreign influences, despite the policy of opening up China in operation for some years.

There has been no formal announcement of a decision of the Central Committee in the 1950s which banned the establishment of foreign cultural institutions in China.

Foreign Minister Genscher went into this in his speech. He said: "I hope that the Goethe Institute in Peking will soon be able to offer a cultural programme, which will serve the frank dialogue between our countries."

He has translated Chinese writers such as Zengzi into German.

In his speech he compared the opening of the Goethe Institute with his Chinese wife giving birth to their child a few days before. His speech increased Chinese goodwill towards him, and it was well applauded when he ended.

There are Goethe Institutes in Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary, and negotiations are underway for establishing them in Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

The aim of the Institute in Peking is "promoting the German language in China."

It is uncertain just how many Chinese are learning German. There are 18,000 studying the language at state-run universities, where it is studied as a main or subsidiary subject.

The Chinese have requested that only the language as such should be taught, not "culture". If possible, for culture could be political.

Just how the language can be separated from culture is a secret for Chinese sophists.

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the cosmos and equally for the spiritual development of men.

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In the 18th century (Chinoiseries in Europe)

was not just the result of trade with Asia. The eye in the hand, a typically surrealistic motive, is to be found again in this exhibition: admittedly not with only one or two hands with eyes, but in the form of the Bodhisattva Senjo-Kannon from a group of three with the King of Knowledge Fudo and the Watchman of the World Bishamonten. Senjo-Kannon, "the Thousand-armed," has here 42 hands and in each hand a small eye. The visitor should not spring to hasty conclusions here — they are "the Thousand Eyes of Compassion" of a divinity, who will assist man to redemption.

Continued on page 11.

■ FILMS

A little man to reward the good work

Felix, Europe's first film prize, presented at the Theater des Westens in Berlin, cannot be compared with Hollywood's Oscar in any way.

The prize was awarded for the first time this year for films made last year. Films from both Eastern and Western Europe qualify.

Felix is figure that gawps upwards with a hand protectively stretched out over a dove. He looks slightly helpless.

He did not glitter under the spotlights as does the polished, streamlined Oscar. But Felix stands for art; the Oscar is commercial.

Markus Lüpertz created the statue for the European Film Prize which has the ambitious title: "The Genius of Youth Protects Freedom."

The prize was called "Felix" because the idea was hammered out between European film-makers and the Berlin Senator for the Arts, Volker Hassemer (CDU), in a restaurant in Cannes called "Chez Felix."

At first Felix was cast in bronze, weighing a hefty 12 pounds. The organisers then feared that prize-winners would collapse on stage because of the weight.

Felix had to be hollowed out; but the statue was still too heavy. It brought the 87-year-old actor Curt Bois to his knees when he tried to pick it up.

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European directors played a special role in the awards. A dozen or so of the famous, including Ingmar Bergman, Sir Richard Attenborough, Bernardo Bertolucci, Istvan Szabo, Wim Wenders and others, signed an appeal for the cultural independence of the European film.

At the annual Academy Awards, that's the official title, a compere announces the arrival of the stars over a loud-speaker. The crowd cheers and whistles and the TV reporters try for interviews, so as to get close-ups of the stars for viewers watching in their homes.

The Oscar awards, the TV show with the largest audience by far, is a major PR exercise for the American film industry.

Via the Oscar award ceremony the industry reaches not only millions of American TV viewers but a big-spending multi-language audience worldwide.

Then the show itself with all its minor hiccups in the Theater des Westens, too small by far.

A Swedish film reviewer complained that the film excerpts were poorly selected. The awards were not always made in front of the TV cameras, but when TV viewers were being shown the film excerpts.

Kahn-Ackermann is planning a literary seminar for 1989 with the writer Gerhard Köpf.

It is also proposed to organise a seminar for 1990 dealing with the problems of translating literature — not problems of a technical nature but the difficulties of taking into consideration another culture.

There are still difficulties that have to be ironed out: The Institute will be accommodated for the first three years at least in a building belonging to the premier foreign language institute in North-West China.

The show, transmitted live to many European countries, was clumsily presented. There was also none of the excitement of the Oscar awards from which so much had been taken over, such as the procedure for handing over the prizes, the presentation of the awards by different stars, who announced: "The winner is..."

Continued on page 14.

Polish and Spanish entries get the first Felixes

Films from Poland and Spain were the first winners of the European Film Prize, Felix.

The two main awards each included a cheque for DM 100,000. The ceremony was in Berlin.

The best film award went to the Polish short-film *Thou Shall Not Kill* by Krzysztof Kieslowski, and the award for the best film made by a young director went to Spain's Pedro Almodóvar for his *Mujeres al Borde de su Nervios*.

Other prizes went to Wim Wenders (West Germany), Louis Malle (France) and Bernardo Bertolucci (Italy).

The three-hour presentation in Berlin's Theater des Westens was televised live to 18 European countries in both East and West to about 300 million viewers.

The guest list for the gala evening read like a who's who of cinema in Europe: Ingmar Bergman, Bernard Boileau, Marcello Mastroianni, Giulietta Masina, Gina Lollobrigida, John Colicos, Mario Adorf, Sergio Leone, Wim Wenders and Istvan Szabo.

The jury, chaired by French actress Isabelle Huppert, took a week to look at 48 nationally-nominated films from 27 European countries to select the best film and the best individual performance.

Considerable attention was given to the fact that all the East Bloc states, including East Germany, took part in the award, presented in West Berlin.

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As a counterpart to the American film industry's Oscar, European

■ THE ENVIRONMENT

Genetically engineering bacteria to break down industrial toxins

STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG

Hans-Joachim Knackmuss and his colleagues in Stuttgart University department of microbiology like going to places other people would not go near with a bicycle.

They like industrial wasteland with its polluted soil; garbage tips, especially tips full of toxic waste; and water purification plant at chemical works.

Their microscopic prey are bacteria that go by names such as pseudomonas and alcaligenes. They must be among the most frequent living creatures in the world. They live in soil or water.

Their natural task consists of decomposing natural substances. They biodegrade higher flora or fauna and bring full-circle the natural cycle on which all living beings rely by reducing them to hydrocarbons, water, nitrogen, sulphur and other substances.

If these micro-organisms did not exist the world's reserves of carbon dioxide, for instance, would be exhausted in 10 years.

For many years man has made use of these little helpers to decompose both natural and manmade substances in water purification plant.

Hans-Joachim Knackmuss has an even more ambitious target. He aims to breed micro-organisms tailor-made to break up toxic substances in which natural bacteria have yet to show the least interest.

Dioxins are one such group of toxic substances he hopes to handle with the aid of custom-built bacteria. The 52-year-old Stuttgart scientist has adopted a dual approach to developing his microbiological detoxifiers.

He first uses nature's own powers of imagination, as it were, then designs micro-organisms on the drawing-board in his laboratory.

He made headline news in *Science*, the US journal, last year with bacteria he and a Swiss scientist had designed to degrade two substances simultaneously.

Bacteria had previously been able to decompose both substances separately, but when they occurred together "the micro-organisms called it a day," Knackmuss says.

The story was even more dramatic. The two substances occurred together in the purification plant of a chemicals factory and poisoned the sludge bacteria, killing off the entire biological purification stage.

It took over four years of basic research to find out why the bacteria were unable to deal with the two substances in combination yet could handle them separately.

"The two substances are very similar," he explains, "and the bacteria set about degrading them in what, respectively, was the wrong way. The by-products were fatal for the bacteria."

He, his team and his fellow-scientist in Geneva succeeded, with what he calls a "heave-ho" and "a fair amount of good luck" in isolating five genes from three different strains of bacteria.

These genes, which incorporate the blueprint for the substances the bacteria use to digest their diet, were transferred to a *Pseudomonas* soil bacterium.

This fete of genetic engineering resulted in a strain of bacteria capable of degrading both toxins simultaneously.

Yet the custom-built Stuttgart bacteria are not yet in use in sewage purification.

They like industrial wasteland with its polluted soil; garbage tips, especially tips full of toxic waste; and water purification plant at chemical works.

Their microscopic prey are bacteria that go by names such as pseudomonas and alcaligenes. They must be among the most frequent living creatures in the world. They live in soil or water.

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For months the IBL bacteria have been eating their way through the soil on the Sandhausen site, which is still highly contaminated. They have already



Hans-Joachim Knackmuss.

(Photo: Röhm)

biodegradable. Bacteria in this line of business are jointly bred in the laboratory. "Over night a strain may emerge that combines several partial activities," Herr Knackmuss says.

This is because micro-organisms can exchange genetic information even from species to species as long as they live in a single cell culture.

This natural combination facility is much more promising than genetic engineering, he says. In between 70 and 80 per cent of cases it is faster.

Ought not "natural" combinations to be vetted by the commission too? Hans-Joachim Knackmuss replies, with a shrug:

"If they want to prohibit that they will have to ban the natural evolution of life."

Rolf Andreas Zell

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 17 November 1988)

Dr Freund of Sandhausen and the laboratory bomb party

DEUTSCHE ALLGEMEINE SONNTAGSBLATT

reduced the chlorohydrocarbon count from 2,500 to 500 micrograms per kilogram.

Chlorhydrinehairs had contaminated the soil and poisoned the ground water. Sandhausen, which now owned the property, drilled emergency wells, installed filters and tried out other techniques to improve the water — but not to much effect.

Unexpected help now seems to be on its way from another laboratory in the "technology park" adjoining the new Heidelberg University campus.

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For months the IBL bacteria have been eating their way through the soil on the Sandhausen site, which is still highly contaminated. They have already

a special diet to make them increase and multiply.

If scientists are unable to identify suitable bacteria *in situ* they resort to microbes that have grown accustomed to the unusual surroundings in other accidents and are capable of digesting the harmful substances.

Together with a specially devised nutrient cocktail the mighty microbes are then let loose on the toxins.

Regardless of the profits they are earning the two IBL bosses and their staff of 33 still have both feet firmly on the ground.

"At present," they say, "we can handle only 10 accidents a year, as against several thousand that are estimated to occur annually in the Federal Republic of Germany alone."

"Besides, we have yet to tackle an abundance of other toxins that may one day, after lengthy R&D work, prove equally amenable to biodegradation."

"We failed to see why the chlorohydrocarbon problem should defy solution, and as nature has not yet had an opportunity of dealing with these new toxins, we gave it a helping hand, as it were."

Neither he nor his partner, research director Dr Peter Souw, are prepared to reveal just how they have achieved the seemingly impossible. They are deliberately vague in describing how their de-contamination technique works.

"If suitable micro-organisms are available where the damage has occurred that are capable of eliminating the toxin if the ground water is suited to their nutritional needs, nutrient is infiltrated in the direction of flow of the ground water toward the contaminated area."

How dangerous is it to use uniform micro-organisms on a large scale?

Helmut Günther
(Deutsche Allgemeine Sonntagsblatt,
Hamburg, 20 November 1988)

No. 1350 - 11 December 1988

THE GERMAN TRIBUNE

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■ MEDICINE

Prevention is better than cure: combating addiction to drugs that are legal

Society is finding it difficult to cope with the problem of illegal drugs; it is not having any more success with legal drugs such as alcohol and prescribed drugs and medicines.

Per capita consumption is steadily increasing. More and more people are becoming addicted to the bottle or to pills.

As a result, there is a growing readiness to help legal addicts. This was shown by the amount of interest in a congress on Alcohol and Drugs at Work at the International Congress Centre in West Berlin.

Over 1,500 doctors, lawyers, psychologists, nurses, social workers, educators and union management representatives attended the congress.

The statistics are a veritable indictment. As quoted by Ulf Fink, Berlin's Senator of Health and Welfare, they cry out for action by the authorities.

It was held by the DHS, an organisation concerned with addiction of all kinds. Its members include welfare associations and specialised addiction agencies.

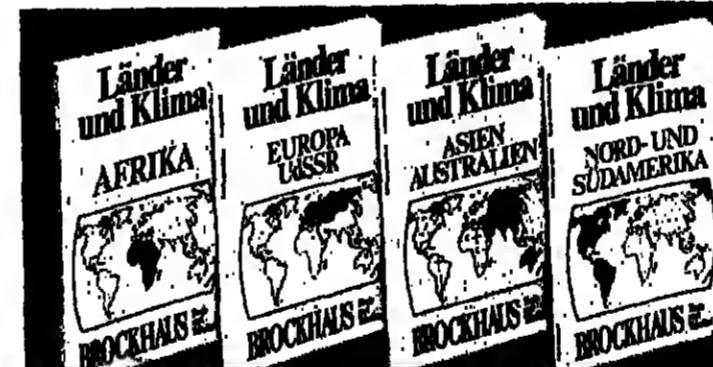
It is held virtually all firms ought to hire a full-time member of staff to look after addicts.

In 1986 nearly 80 per cent of 25,000 courses of hospital treatment costing DM500m were for alcoholics and a further seven per cent for multiple addicts.

Absenteeism due to alcohol costs at least DM3bn a year.

Roughly 800 private companies, mainly large firms, and public sector employers in the Federal Republic of Germany have launched programmes to help addicts.

Meteorological stations all over the world



supplied the data arranged in see-at-a-glance tables in these new reference books. They include details of air and water temperature, precipitation, humidity, sunshine, physical stress of climate, wind conditions and frequency of thunderstorms.

These figures compiled over the years are invaluable both for planning journeys to distant countries and for scientific research.

Basic facts and figures for every country in the world form a preface to the tables. The emphasis is on the country's natural statistics, on climate, population, trade and transport.

The guides are handy in size and flexibly bound, indispensable for daily use in commerce, industry and the travel trade.

Four volumes are available:
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Asia/Australia, 240 pp., DM 24.80;
Africa, 130 pp., DM 24.80;
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agreed. Yet even works councillors keen enough on their union work to attend courses had been known to be hopping mad on being told that schnapps was not sold in the canteen.

Herr Janzen recalled that the trade unions had tried to negotiate a total ban on alcohol at work in about 1904. But they failed because the workers would hear nothing of the idea.

They argued that as long as conditions at work were benthic human dignity they must be allowed to make them more bearable by taking drink.

This argument may no longer hold water, yet alcohol and patent medicines are still taken to ease the burden of both overwork and boring routine, as Herr Fink put it.

Medical specialists wondered whether the growing resort to narcotics and medicine as an escape valve might not be attributable to people being less prepared to tolerate the ups and downs and aches and pains of everyday life.

Psychologists and welfare workers argued that the use of alcohol, a legalised drug, had been part and parcel of German society for centuries.

If there had been any change, it was merely that standards by which the use of alcohol was judged had steadily declined and been abandoned in recent decades.

Addicts at work in either the public or the private sector stand to derive little benefit from such deliberations, so the congress considered a change in strategy.

It did so because both management and workmates showed scant sense of solidarity with alcohol and drug addicts.

Smaller firms could share the services of a specialist in this sector.

Herr Janzen felt a "reorientation in combating addictive complaints" was indispensable in view of the spiralling cost of the health service.

The addict must be enabled to stay in his accustomed surroundings. If they were an environment that encouraged addiction, they must be better included in the course of treatment.

The aim and effect must surely be to prevent higher costs from weighing yet more heavily on health insurance and pension schemes.

A "welfare triad" might well prove the answer: advice at work, outpatient treatment and the facilities offered by self-help groups.

Difficulties in treating addiction at work are, however, evidently not just a matter of marks and pennings. Society has double standards where alcohol is concerned, the conference was told.

Being a good drinker and able to hold your drink is a social virtue. To fulfil in the sense of growing addicted to alcohol or falling ill can easily lead to an addict being ostracised both at work and in private life.

Union representatives at the congress were scathing in their repeated reports of hooliganism in the boardroom and of alcoholics among the management.

They were hardly in a position to rule out the man on the shopfloor slaking his thirst with a beer or two.

"They drink like fish in the executive suite," staff representatives agreed, "yet are only too ready to put the heat on to the small fry who drink one over the eight."

And even where both sides are clearly aware of the problem, theory and practice can still be polarised.

IG Metall's Rudi Rausch, who works on addiction and addiction problems for the union, had a role to tell about centres where the trade unions hold residential courses.

That is far too long, especially as family life has suffered in the meantime, work performance has declined and the addict's sexual standing has suffered irreparable damage.

So it is better to try any approach to combat the problem before it is too late;

Dieter Dietrich

(Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 25 November 1988)

■ FRONTIERS

From bricklayer to fakir in a series of scorching lessons

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

His cycle has only one wheel and no handlebars. But he sits on it as if it couldn't be more comfortable. With his right hand, he pushes another one-wheeled cycle ahead of him. With the other hand he holds a seven-step aluminum ladder in the air.

A khaki rucksack clogging with Broccia bowls (used in street bowls) hangs from his back and bounces along the ground. A worn-out board projects from the top of the sack. So does the grip end of an Indian club and a Chinese fire torch; around the sack are a few hula hoops.

Rolf Bendig is on his way to work — in wide, black breeches that flutter as he goes. His head is completely bald apart from a little piece of hair at the back of his head. A silver half-moon dangles from one ear-lobe; from the other shines a plum earring.

Bendig, who comes from Cologne, has chosen a career that puts no value on dress regulations, that has no boss and only a few fellow practitioners: he is a fakir. (Fakir: ascetic Hindu ascetic or wonder-worker.)

His professional name is Fakir Alyn; and he describes himself as an "entertainment artist specialising in fire" who "uses sharp items and blunts them with comedy."

At company parties and street festivals, he walks over broken glass with bare feet without drawing the slightest drop of blood.

For three years he performed with a blazing torch and a bed of nails he assembled himself. He went to the big cities of Europe and, in the pedestrianised shopping zones, operated his own one-man street theatre.

He laid himself on the bed of nails and walked over broken glass, he sparred fire and swallowed flames and wriggled out of iron chains. He pepped up the traditional fakir repertoire by encouraging audience participation and introducing touches of humour. The humour, however, was not well received by fellow fakirs, who regard it as inappropriate for the trade.

He juggles with the torch, frying pan and raw egg; blows up a rubber glove through his nose until it is the size of a pumpkin; and, as he pulls away, plays hoolahoop with a ring of fire while a fire-work glows on top of his bald head.

For almost 11 years, Alyn has been one of what he estimates are a hand of only about 20 or 30 fakirs in West Germany who risk their necks by doing things that have been performed by religious ascetics in Asia for centuries.

The work "fakir" means "poor person" in Arabic. Once upon a time, ascetics wandered as religious mendicants through the Islamic countries, using their tough skin to demonstrate self-discipline in the interests of both God and Man.

The British, who in their conquering ways, came across them more often than other Europeans, popularised the fakir in Europe, although it became the artistic style which was looked at with wonder rather than the religious.

Bendig, 40, had not the slightest intention of doing anything in this line until one day he went to Cologne's Volksgarten and saw a fakir playing with fire. He recalls now how, at the time, he was trying to find his niche somewhere.

He had already tried his hand at many things. He might have become one of any number of things, a singer, perhaps, or a dinner. He was then a bricklayer. At 30 years old, 85 kilos (13 stone 5 pounds) and still had hair on his head. He had just decided to completely change his lifestyle.

Continued from page 11

Another him. The only real danger is if a gust of wind comes from an unexpected direction. He uses yoga exercises to loosen his whole body so that it notices neither flames nor nails. He describes the combination of yoga and meditation as a form of self-hypnosis. Before every performance, he stands on his head, yoga style, to eliminate stage fright and amuse his audience. Another trick to prevent pain and to win energy is to stay away from drugs of any sort. Not even coffee. At home, only herbal tea and malt ersatz coffee from barley malt are served.

In the kitchen there is a grain mill. Next to it is flour made from soya beans — he doesn't eat any animal protein. And fire-eating Alyn hasn't smoked for 25 years.

He says: "It is all right beforehand to know that you're going to go over the glass, but it's no good thinking as you go: 'I'm walking over broken glass and I'm not allowed to injure myself.' Otherwise, you won't manage it." A fakir must be hard with himself, even if he burns his feet.

He knows from experience. The first time he put, full of trepidation, the fiery torch in his mouth, he burnt himself and for a week was unable to eat only cold food.

For his first fire attempt, he simply wrapped some gauze round a torch, dipped it in a flammable solution, lit it, held his arm over the flame and discovered: "Bloody hot."

He still regularly burns the hair on his arms, but otherwise the heat doesn't

equally in the East and the West. Every East Bloc country producing films took part.

Hurst Pehnert, East Berlin's Deputy Minister for the Arts, who had welcomed the Prize in an interview he had given before the event, came with his colleagues.

The success of the awards ceremony was made possible to a considerable extent because it was a totally European event, an acknowledgement of the joint traditions of the European film.

"Politicians must provide the location and hope that people use it to the full," said Ulrich Fleßmeyer, Berlin's Senator for the Arts in an interview he had given before the prize-giving.

Despite the considerable costs the Berlin Senate hopes that the prize award ceremony will remain in Berlin. It is not yet

known whether the venue will change from "European Culture City" to "European Culture City," or remain in one place. It is also still not certain whether the prize will become an established institution, which is what many film industry people would like.

The prize, according to the appeal made by European directors, "has not been created against anything but for something," for strengthening the European film industry in the East and the West in equal measure.

Even if the Felix is not to be an "Anti-Oscar," the award was a "dialogue with the Oscar," as Harry Gilmore put it, the American representative to Berlin.

Marianne Heuwagener

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich)

28 November 1988



Fakir Alyn . . . it doesn't pay to think about it.

(Photo Klein)

and manages "to make a good living." His programme has broadened enormously over the past few years because, he says, long term the fakir repertoire is too limited to remain interesting. So he does things that the ascetic world never dreamt of doing such as juggling with Indian clubs and doing his act on the one-wheeled cycle.

He says the more traditional of the acts are not as popular as they once were. Sometimes he asks his audience if he should do the head-nails trick and it says "no." Alyn thinks that they see so much aggression on television and video that they would rather see something less serious. But his fire acts, they are still popular.

The most important thing for him is to be able to put his craft over and be funny at the same time.

He trains several hours a day, which means even going shopping and taking his dog out while riding his one-wheeled cycle. He keeps himself fit with hard physical exercise.

He says he knows he is not the age where people are prone to heart attacks, so he pushes himself to the limit. But otherwise, he feels his age is no handicap.

Rolf Bendig, alias Fakir Alyn, is still restless: "I'm still looking." It could well be that he will find something totally different to do.

Only one thing is certain: "I want to be able to make a terrific living at it so I'll have a good income in old age." So he really does count himself as mere mortal, after all.

Petra Plathwisch

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 26 November 1988)

■ HORIZONS

Planned law aimed at helping unmarried fathers gain access to children

Felix Stoltz

he would like to see his son twice a month. He said it would be nice to have him for a weekend.

For a year, he saw his daughter every Sunday for a few hours. Then the mother stopped him. She got a court order back her up.

Her reasons for the change of mind seem reasonable: the daughter became upset on seeing the father and afterwards needed comforting.

The judge didn't look into the question of why the girl became upset. Nor did any psychologist. Nor any social worker.

Fathers who have to pay maintenance regard comments about the child's welfare and the mother's rights as divisive. One father of two children said: "I do not want just to have to pay for ever."

Since he separated from his companion, who was the mother of his son and daughter, he has only been able to follow their development from photographs.

For the past four years he has received a colour photo with the names of the children and the date on the reverse side once a year.

He has never received a letter of thanks or even a telephone call for the presents he has sent his children.

One day in August, Kurine Bagheri-Gamerschlag waited for her daughter Sama, 3, and David, 5, to return home. They didn't come.

They had been to visit their Iranian father, Siamak Bagheri, and the mother feared that he had absconded to Iran with them. He had.

He had done it once before, in October 1987, to force her to withdraw a divorce application. So she stopped proceedings, the children were returned and she opened proceedings again.

A Cologne educationalist said: "Probably we would be better off not demanding so much. Perhaps it would be better to announce that we would be content with just the right to visit our children."

He has not been able to visit his son for the past three years. He is putting all his hopes on the new law and the attitude taken by the judge in the guardianship court.

After separating from his companion of many years standing Peter Sander (his name has also been altered) once had the right to visit his son — twice a month for three hours — but this was taken away from him when the mother said that the visits were not good for the baby's well-being.

According to Peter Sander he and his son got on well together until the day his former companion discovered that he was living with another woman.

Sander is a teacher. He did not wish to have his true identity revealed in case it provoked his former companion and the mother of his son, when he made a second approach for visiting rights.

He is convinced that his rights were discontinued not on the grounds of his son's welfare but simply because his former companion found out about his new relationship.

He maintained: "I have been punished because of the new woman in my life." He said he felt that he had been cheated out of his rights as a father.

This case is far from an isolated one.

Doris Bounaira of the Cologne-based "Child Protection International" claims

the school gate with her class friends. He did not get out of the car, but he felt as if he were a sinner caught out when his daughter asked him if he was waiting for someone.

The stories which banned fathers tell do not fit very well with what women have to say after a broken relationship.

The men have hurt pride, hurt vanity. They attempt to get involved even after the breakup, claim ownership over everything, play the strong-man and pretend to feelings they do not have; the list of complaints against the alleged bad fathers is endless.

The Church and feminists provide additional ammunition against the modest demands of fathers of families where no wedding ceremony has taken place.

One pastor asked a man why he had not married. The despairing man had for years played the role of father of the family and had brought up his two children "just like in an ordinary family."

The pastor could not understand his answer: "Neither of us wanted to marry."

Feminists insist on women's rights as if they were defending the last bastion in the battle of the sexes.

A woman recently placed an advertisement in a Berlin newspaper: "I want to get visiting rights withdrawn from the father of my children. Who knows any tips or tricks to achieve this?"

The question reflects what has driven fathers to the barricades after years of silence.

Marianne Quotter

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 4 November 1988)

that there is a lack of international agreement. There is, it is true, the 1980 Hague agreement on the aspects of civil law concerning international abductions of children, and a European Community agreement on the recognition and implementation of custody orders for children.

No Islamic country, however, has signed these agreements and, according to Doris Bounaira, these are just the countries which present the greatest problems.

Failing agreements "Child Protection International" relies on prevention. "We try," Doris Bounaira said, "to nip the situation in the bud. One has to take every sign of what the father is planning seriously."

In problem cases the association recommends allowing a third party to keep the situation under control or to withdraw visiting privileges completely.

In many cases Doris Bounaira uses a method that has been applied successfully in France; during or after a divorce the non-German partner in the marriage agrees to give up all rights of custody in a private contract.

This agreement must be witnessed in all its legal details by the person's embassy or a court in the country of the non-German member of the marriage.

In cases of emergency there are then good legal grounds, even in Iran, to sue for recognition of a custody order in the man's own country; this puts a stop to possible "abductions."

Advice of this sort has come too late for Karine Bagheri-Gamerschlag. Her divorce has come through and she was given custody of the children.

Siamak Bagheri has started divorce proceedings in Iran and put in his claim for custody of the children.

Little Sara is now attending a school in Teheran. She wrote secretly to her mother: "I cry a lot. Whatever happens you must come and bring us back."

Hanne Eckert

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 27 November 1988)